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REPORT OF THE GENERAL MEETING BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM AND OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES, HELD AT UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS FROM 15 TO 17 MAY 1991

CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	GENERAL	1 - 4	3
II.	ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS	5 - 9	3
III.	STATEMENTS BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES	10 - 18	5
IV.	ORGANIZATION OF WORK	19 - 20	6
V.	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	21 - 29	6
	A. Environment	22	7
	B. Drug abuse control	23	7
	C. Women and development	24	8
	D. Disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and relief	25	8
	E. Strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of American States systems at the national level	26	9

CONTENTS (continued)

	Paragraphs	Page
F. Children and development	27	10
G. Rural development and agriculture	28	11
H. Indian people and development	29	11
Annex. United Nations and Organization of American States lead agencies		13

I. GENERAL

1. In accordance with paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 45/10 of 25 October 1990, consultations regarding preparations for a general meeting were held between the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Questions, Regional Cooperation, Decolonization and Trusteeship and the Assistant Secretary-General of the Organization of American States (OAS). As a result of those consultations, it was decided to hold the general meeting in New York from 15 to 17 May 1991. Following consultations between their respective offices, it was also decided that the meeting would be inaugurated by both Secretaries-General.

2. During the above consultations, priority areas for consideration by the meeting were identified by OAS. Accordingly, the relevant lead agencies from the United Nations and OAS were also identified (see the annex to the present report). Those agencies were requested to prepare working papers within their areas of competence, for the consideration of participants.

3. On 13 February 1991, a pre-coordination meeting was held in New York between officials of the substantive department of the Secretariat and representatives of the liaison offices of United Nations specialized agencies on matters relating to the forthcoming meeting.

4. During the following month, the Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Questions, Regional Cooperation, Decolonization and Trusteeship and support staff visited the headquarters of OAS and reviewed the arrangements for the meeting with the Assistant Secretary-General and senior officials of the OAS General Secretariat and its specialized agencies and commissions.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

5. The general meeting between representatives of OAS and the United Nations system of organizations was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 15 to 17 May 1991.

6. The meeting was opened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States.

7. Representatives of the following departments and offices of the United Nations and other organizations of the United Nations system participated in the meeting: Department for Special Political Questions, Regional Cooperation, Decolonization and Trusteeship; Office of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation; Office for Political and General Assembly Affairs and Secretariat Services; Department of Political and Security Council Affairs; Department for Disarmament Affairs; Department of International Economic and Social Affairs; United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations; Department of Technical Cooperation for Development; Department of Public Information; United Nations Centre for Human

Rights; United Nations Office at Vienna/Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs; United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM); United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); United Nations University; Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); United Nations Centre for Human Settlements; Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator (UNDRO); Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); World Food Council (WFC); United Nations International Drug Control Programme; International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW); International Labour Organisation (ILO); Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO); World Health Organization (WHO); World Bank/International Finance Corporation; and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

8. The following departments of the General Secretariat, as well as commissions and agencies of the Organization of American States also participated: Executive Secretariat for Legal Affairs; Executive Secretariat for Education, Science and Culture; Executive Secretariat for Economic and Social Affairs; Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM); Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD); Inter-American Development Bank (IDB); Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA); Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO); Inter-American Defense Board (IADB); Pan-American Institute of Geography and History; Inter-American Children's Institute (IACI); Inter-American Indian Institute (IAII); and Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

9. The meeting held three plenary sessions from 15 to 17 May 1991 and two sessions for the substantive work of the eight working groups. The first plenary session adopted the following agenda:

1. Strengthening cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and Organization of American States systems in:

   (a) Political matters;

   (b) Economic and social affairs.

2. Environment.

3. Drug abuse control.

4. Women and development.

5. Disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and relief.

6. Strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and Organization of American States systems at the national level.

7. Children and development.

8. Rural development and agriculture.

9. Indian people and development.

10. Conclusions and recommendations.

III. STATEMENTS BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES

10. The Secretary-General of the United Nations welcomed the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States and their respective representatives. He noted that it was the first meeting between the secretariats of the world Organization and one of the oldest regional organizations. He expressed his pleasure that during their respective terms of office, an era of collaboration had been launched to promote peace on the American continent and the development of its people.

11. The Secretary-General stated that at the political level both he and the Secretary-General of OAS had maintained close cooperation with regard to the peace process in Central America. In that connection, he noted their joint initiatives and their participation in the International Verification and Follow-up Commission following the signing of the Esquipulas II accords, and at the request of the Central American Presidents in September 1989, the joint establishment of the International Support and Verification Commission. He noted also that their two organizations had established excellent cooperation in tne electoral process in Nicaragua and Haiti.

12. The Secretary-General drew attention to the established areas of cooperation between their two organizations, which included the participation of OAS in the Special Plan of Economic Cooperation for Central America; country-level meetings between resident representatives of the two organizations, as well as individual agencies and organizations in economic and social sectors. He noted also that the two organizations and their respective specialized bodies and commissions had a history of collaboration in areas of common interest.

13. The Secretary-General expressed the view that the primary focus of the deliberations should be the strengthening of cooperation and coordination between the two organizations. In conclusion, he expressed his appreciation for the contribution of OAS and its membership to the work of the United Nations, and his confidence that the meeting would make a positive contribution to their common endeavours.

14. In his statement, the Secretary-General of OAS expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to address the meeting and stated that the mandate given to him by the General Assembly of OAS had reiterated that he should continue

to adopt the measures necessary to promote and broaden cooperation between OAS and the United Nations.

15. The Secretary-General of OAS emphasized that the above mandates would provide an institutional framework whereby the valuable tradition of cooperation would result in specific activities of coordination for the benefit of member States. He said that a first step would be, within this process, to define the activities which were to be coordinated.

16. The Secretary-General expressed the view that the three concrete results which should evolve from the meeting were: (a) an agreement to establish instruments and mechanisms which would intensify the exchange of information at headquarters and in the field necessary for the coordination of activities; (b) the institution of a flexible and expeditious process of identifying programmes, projects and activities suitable for cooperation between the two organizations; and (c) the establishment of follow-up arrangements.

17. In conclusion, the Secretary-General commended the new atmosphere, which provided the opportunity to work more closely for the benefit of member States. The cooperation between the two organizations on Central America was an historic step and constituted a significant development both in the relationship between the two organizations and for a dialogue within the hemisphere.

18. Statements were also made by the Executive Secretary of ECLAC and the Under-Secretary-General of the Centre for Human Rights, in which they outlined the close working relationship of their respective bodies with the Organization of American States and its commissions and agencies.

IV. ORGANIZATION OF WORK

19. The general meeting was co-chaired by the Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Questions, Regional Cooperation, Decolonization and Trusteeship, and by the Assistant Secretary-General of OAS. Statements were made by 21 participants representing the United Nations system of organizations and OAS, in support of strengthening cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and OAS.

20. Eight working groups were established on the basis of agenda items 2 to 9 and were co-chaired by the representatives of lead agencies from the two organizations.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

21. At its closing session on 17 May 1991, the general meeting decided to take note of the conclusions and recommendations of the working groups and refer them to the relevant authorities for follow-up action. Summaries of the conclusions and recommendations are set out below.

A. Environment

22. The working group on the "Environment" recommended:

(a) The exchange of information;

(b) The holding of joint meetings;

(c) The exchange of skills;

(d) Joint development of postgraduate training in planning and management of the coastal and oceanic environment;

(e) Joint coordination in the administration of protected areas and cultural heritage;

(f) Coordination in the management of tropical and subtropical forests in the Americas;

(g) Coordination of integrated coastal zone management and the management of Exclusive Economic Zones;

(h) Coordination in the management of national and multinational watersheds;

(i) Joint cooperation in regional ecologically sustainable industrialization and energy conservation;

(j) Closer collaboration at the policy and technical levels;

(k) Convening an inter-sectoral meeting on environment, development, natural resources and energy.

B. Drug abuse control

23. The working group for coordination between the United Nations International Drug Control Programme and the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission recommended the following:

(a) Assistance to Governments in the harmonization of drug legislation;

(b) Strengthening of the administration of justice;

(c) Training of officials;

(d) Joint action by the two organizations in preventive education in collaboration with UNESCO; and the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO)/WHO;

(e) Collaboration in the collection of statistical data, including the establishment of a computerized system for the collection, storage and dissemination of such data;

(f) Preparation of international treaties on control of drugs and a model regulation.

C. Women and development

24. The working group on "Women and development" recommended that the United Nations and OAS should work together in the following areas:

(a) Economic and employment generation for women:

(i) Research on the informal sector;

(ii) Policy guidelines for sensitizing decision makers to supporting women's roles in the informal sector in the form of policy development portfolios;

(iii) Development of programmes at the level of the industrial sector, specifically targeting women;

(iv) Training of women in entrepreneurship and management;

(v) The development of small-scale industries;

(vi) Development of industries and technologies for women's activities related to the food cycle;

(vii) Establishment of credit modalities for women;

(b) Environment and women:

(i) Participation in the Inter-American Consultation on Women and Environment, October 1991;

(ii) Provision of Spanish translation of basic substantive research conducted by INSTRAW.

D. Disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and relief

25. The working group on "Disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and relief" recommended:

(a) Development of a work plan by the General Secretariat of OAS in consultation with the Inter-American Emergency Aid Committee and the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator to address the current

challenges in emergency response and to exploit opportunities for United Nations and OAS collaboration under their existing agreement;

(b) Consideration of a joint post-disaster assessment of impact and needs;

(c) Establishment of reconstruction programming and project formulation following disasters;

(d) Inclusion of disaster mitigation and prevention in development planning and project formulation;

(e) Formulation of policy and programme recommendations for multilateral and bilateral development financing agencies to incorporate natural hazard risk assessments in project appraisals;

(f) Development of vulnerability reduction programmes for urban watersheds, and for the agriculture, energy, health, transportation and tourism sectors;

(g) Development of hazard assessment programmes for landslides, floods and desertification as part of integrated development planning studies;

(h) Establishment of a focal point for disaster mitigation, preparedness and relief activities;

(i) Continuation of cooperation in the field of disaster management training and awareness promotion;

(j) Training programmes in vulnerability reduction in agriculture, energy, health, transportation and tourism sectors;

(k) Exploring the possibility of joint training programmes aimed at trainers and practising professionals in the formulation of vulnerability reduction for lifeline networks and other critical facilities;

(l) Development of effective information systems and use of computer-based information for hazard mitigations and exploring emergency management.

E. Strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of American States systems at the national level

26. The working group on "Strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and the OAS systems at the national level" recommended:

(a) The establishment of a mechanism for a sustained central role for Governments in consultation with organizations and agencies in respect of the formulation, delivery and evaluation of programmes and projects;

(b) Coordination roles for the director of an office of the OAS General Secretariat in a country comparable to that carried out by United Nations Resident Coordinators;

(c) A maximum increase in the flow of information between representatives of the two organizations on programmes and projects and at the earliest stages of the programming process;

(d) For the representatives in the field, there should be:

(i) Regular meetings;

(ii) Combined programming exercises;

(iii) Co-funding and execution of projects;

(iv) The establishment of computerized communication between the Government and the technical cooperation agencies;

(v) Sharing of information, particularly statistical data;

(vi) Workshops and seminars;

(vii) Studies and publications;

(e) The continuation of formal channels of communication for field representatives with their headquarters and between organizations themselves.

F. Children and development

27. The working group on "Children and development" recommended:

(a) An exchange of studies, and of policy and operational documents;

(b) Identification and establishment of new mechanisms for communication, or reinforcement of existing ones in order to determine specific activities leading to future cooperation;

(c) Renewed interest in the progress of a research project undertaken jointly by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and OAS on refugee children;

(d) Calling the attention of other international agencies, such as UNICEF, PAHO and the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights, to further research and promote improvements in the legal status of refugee children.

G. Rural development and agriculture

28. The working group on "Rural development and agriculture" reached the following conclusions and recommendations:

(a) Continuation of cooperation in activities already under way in the areas of cooperation in animal health and plant protection;

(b) Potential areas of cooperation in rural development and sustainable agriculture;

(c) Possible participation by OAS agencies in the FAO Administrative Coordination Committee and its task force on rural development;

(d) Issuance by FAO of an invitation to all agencies to attend the Sixth Intergovernmental Consultation on Rural Development, which was to be held in Bolivia in October 1991;

(e) Future cooperation in fisheries, water resources, food processing and technology.

H. Indian people and development

29. The working group on "Indian people and development" recommended:

(a) The convening of an inter-agency meeting on indigenous people;

(b) Promoting attention to indigenous development (rights and social sustainability) in international conferences;

(c) The joint establishment of guidelines to be followed by multilateral and bilateral agencies when assessing technical assistance projects related to indigenous people;

(d) The establishment of a programme of support for indigenous organizations and groups in the formulation and implementation of their own indigenous development projects;

(e) Promotion of the ratification of the Indigenous and Tribal Populations Convention (No. 169) of 1989;

(f) Providing support and advice to the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights with respect to the elaboration of an inter-American instrument on principles relating to indigenous rights;

(g) Development of a programme to further knowledge of indigenous and human rights;

(h) Joint development of a new collaborative cooperative relationship between ILO and the Inter-American Indian Institute;

(i) Collaboration to support activities undertaken for the 1993 International Year of Indigenous People.

ANNEX

United Nations and Organization of American States lead agencies

Agenda item	Lead agency/organization
Environment	United Nations Environment Programme
	OAS General Secretariat, Inter-American Bank (IDB) and Inter-American Defense Board (IADB)
Drug abuse control	United Nations Office at Vienna
	Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission
Women and development	United Nations Development Fund for Women and International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
	Inter-American Commission of Women
Disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and relief	Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator
	OAS General Secretariat, IDB and IADB
Strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of American States systems at the national level	Office of the United Nations Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation and United Nations Development Programme
	Office of the Assistant Secretary-General of OAS
Children and development	United Nations Children's Fund
	Inter-American Children's Institute

Agenda item	Lead agency/organization
Rural development and agriculture	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture and IDB
Indian people and development	International Labour Organisation
	Inter-American Indian Institute